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liberty without socialism is privelege, injustice;
socialism without liberty is slavery and brutality.
MICHAEL BAKUNIN.

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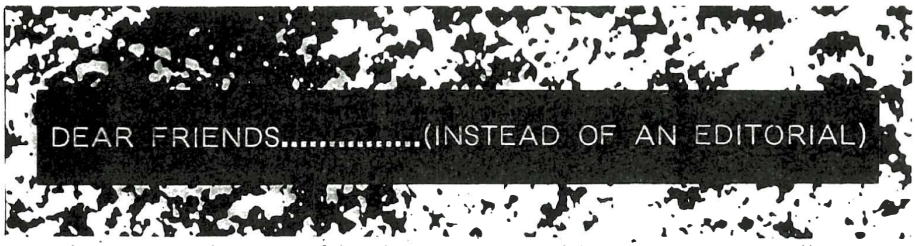
G. Hill apologises for not been able to contribute in this issue but his instalments will continue in the next issue.



In conversations and friendly arguments with you, you are really generous with the appellation "nice" as if it exonerates the protagonists of all vices, cleans their sins and softens crimes they have committed, or are going to commit, against their own kind and the ecology of their own existence. No wonder that this sonorous word finds me cold: a nice cop, a nice soldier, a nice manager, a nice man and so ad infinitum. Yet behind the nice cop lurks the real cop ready to release the trigger of a gun and let the bullet penetrate the heart of a noble person whose unique crime is transgressing the injustice of law and order and trying to establish a more just and egalitarian society. The real cop shoots and handcuffs with pleasure and, with pleasure, he puts people behind bars to satisfy a sadistic, machoist game. The soldier is a nice person too. He is a human like you and me and yet he is a mercenary to a government, a trained killer whose aim is not to defend his country, an ideology, but to prevent at any price the counter-insurgency and thus thwart the dreams of the underdog, himself one too, for bread, justice and space. And the manager? Is not he nice, dressed properly, a tie and polished shoes to match the colour of his appearance? His tongue is honnled, his voice suave. He is ethically committed to a free society and genuine competition, but, does not shun subsidies. He is a liberal democrat, provided that money goes his way and into his pockets. That the multitudes suffer or are hungry and starved is not his concern unless it is relevant to the growth of his company. And here is also a scientist who in the name of the impartial truth works for biological warfare and nuclear holocaust, supporting the conventional lie called government and vesting with ethical attire, those who grant him sinecure and security for life. Then there is a nice man who smiles,drinks and indulges in intellectual masturbation, who sings revolutionary songs, emits revolutionary fire against injustices and hierarchy, forges progressive slogans, and quotes the names of the socialist hadjiology. Then, proud of his revolutionary ethos, he goes home and beats the shit out of his wife to show her the meaning of socialist reality. And your sisters, are they not nice? They fight for emancipation, for equality of the sexes, provided that the other sex is subservient to theirs. Their hearts must beat in unison with all sisters, otherwise they may be considered to suffer from a reactionary germ, be deviates or have a touch of a male chauvinist disease - a mental aberration from the right consciousness which must be taken seriously and surgically removed. Has no man faught for freedom, equality, emancipation and socialism? Why do the sisters see him as a potential or real rapist, a hangman and executioner and are full of spite towards him? Do we not live in a nice relationship? Brothers executing brothers, and now the sisters ready to executetheir brothers and then, finally, themselves as if we have not all suffered enough. Are we not surrounded by nice people? Some Amazonian

fascists, others-shauvinistic pigs. Was not Hitler a nice guy after all? He was a vegetarian who would not devour animal flesh because it was cruel to animals, but nothing stopped him turning a few million jews, gypsies and others into manure to the German race. is not Reagan a nice guy too? Full of christian virtues and saintly expressions. Does he not cry, with crocodile tears, over the death of an American child whose death he tries to wash in the blood of the lambs, be they Arabs, Lybians or Latin Americans? What a nice brotherly love.

To be nice is to be suave in tongue, to dress properly, smile with a pleasant American appearance and have good manners so that one can deceive, exploit and kill. Thus nice has a much more extensive application than one imagines.

To be nice is to say yes to the others, to be obedient, subservient, to be a slave. If we are to be free we need to learn to say no, to negate, to affirm ourselves even if it causes chagrin to others. We need to undermine conventional moral appearance.To say "no" to those in authority, mothers, fathers and so on- is an important utterance because it expresses a decision to opt out from their power ethos and assert one's independence. For I to be I, I must be equal to you, and not your subject. The act of saying "no" is the act of acquiring autonomy and the ability to act in the objective reality and not be its passive recipient; to be able to formulate a critical approach to it, break blind faith in authority and domination and to negate power and manipulation. To say "no" is to be an iconoclast, to confront and to negate the others,if necessary. Saying "no" is to set in motion a process of thinking, dormant until now, and transforming the energy of defeatism into a positive assertive current. It is the beginning of dialogue that, for the first time, takes into account the other person as an equal to self and brings the communication within its real perspective, not as order-giving and order-receiving, as inferior or superior, but as a means to exchange, debate, assert, negate and learn, not on an authoritarian but libertarian base.

If the notion of "no" is seen by the "nice syndrome" protagonists as complete rejection of him or her, the onus is on the latter to see "no" as an indicative suggestion of realization of freedom and self assertion. "No" challanges authority, not the person; the tyrant, not the man; the mother, not the woman; that is, all the paraphernalia that imprisons the spirit, enchains emotions, emaciates intellegence and destroys the body. Those who fear "no" as a threat are either a) insecure, b) authoritarian, c) have vested interests to keep alive the inferiority-superiority dichotomy d) feel inadequate as subject turned into an object. Hence, as a defence mechanism, they subscribe to unconditional affirmative responses. Hence the hostility that accompanies such a defence mechanism reflects the real fear that well-mastered and orchestrated domination is cracking, that the, insidious for authority, process of liberation is settling in and the authoritarian personality is under attack. Thus the person who considers himself threatened in this way develops anxiety, paranoia and depression and takes the affirmativeness of "no" as an outrageous attack on his her personality or individuality. Fear of freedom cannot tolerate the road to independence because the

latter creates insecurity and undermines the conventional, individual and social fabrics.

Certainly, there are cases when the "no syndrome" is a rationalization of the lack of differentiation, when it is simply a vehicle to acceptance by the way of emancipatory verbalism. Various groups that purport to negate the conventional wisdom,to side with liberty and advance emancipation by eulogizing freedom, are often the same groups that make sure that the personal fits the pattern established by them, be those groups feminist or otherwise. Independence is castigated as dangerous deviationism, harmful to the group which upholds the cause of sister, brother, homo or heterosexual hoods. It is subtle ideological coercion to evoke unqualified and unconditional affirmative response by the individual under investigation. It is desirable that freedom is forstalled, pleasure turned into submission, enjoyment into pain. To deny freedom, to oppress enjoyment, is to act the role of the executioner, the "yes" person who eliminates the "no" person. The individual ought not to enjoy his sexual act,neither the person striving for emancipation his freedom and independence. Thus one remains submissive to the will of sister, brother, father, mother; one surrenders unconditionally to the affirmation of their will Otherwise one is condemned to solitude and is ostracised. One is alone, the alienation is complete this time because it is functional to purpoted anti-alienation. Perhaps one needs Sade to tell us the pertinent truth:"...the body politic - considers men a mere collection of objects". One is condemned to be depersonalized in an impersonal universe where existential despair makes the "no syndrome" a difficult if not rare occurance. My identity is allowed if it suits a group identity. Soon I will be forced to carry an identity card to be an identity. The paradox is obvious: I am a person and an individual if,and only if,I am not a person and I deny my individuality;if, and only if, I am branded as a nice person, approved and accepted by liberated sisters, socialist brothers, chauvinistic fathers etc.;if, and only if, I am not I but somebody else moulded and formed by above groups, coteries or parties.

Certainly my sisters may argue that egalitarian groups consist of sharing a similar reality perception where personal identity is not submerged. I cannot agree more with that,but, I am aware that heavy ideological groups, such as "consciousness raising", are approximations to monomania where deviates are branded, haunted, attacked and raped emotionaly and intellectually.

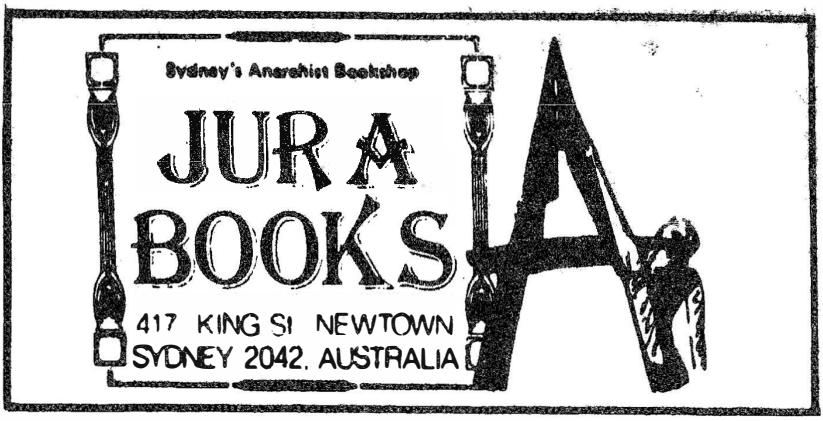
Yes my friend, in your vocabulary everybody is "nice" because your private individual lacks the courage to face the conscious conspiracy of your reality, which you have carefully selected, nourished and given "nice" attributes to, which were not there, whose destruction would undermine the illusions of your existence, hence your anxiety, silence and the niceties you surround yourself with. If you say "no" to your selected reality you will open the floodgates of denied or repressed reality which will wipe out the image you have of yourself, remove false hopes, undermine pretended security and expose your simulated identity, and thus tear the spectacle of your illusions.Since a world without illusion is unpalatable tangibility, as it is real freedom, you recoil to your illusions as a defence mechanism

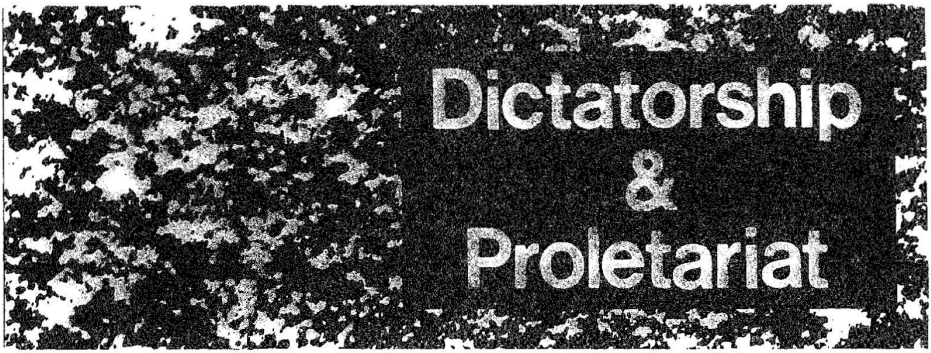
which inhibits any attempt for emancipation, self-realisation and liberation. Thus, the uniqueness of "you" as "you" is negated by the fact that you surround yourself with "nice" people who need your help, who like you as a nurse, seek you as a mother-confessor and admire you as a friend. Moreover such surroundings suit you because they reflect the perceptions of your internal world which you, being insecure, like to view as stable and permanent. Any changes are shunned and feared as they are bound to alter your reality, which in turn will undermine your certainty based on an identity that has no firm base in your own convictions. Hence choosing an environment of niceties affirms your illusions, but, denies your individuality.

Well, to me as an anarchist, the reality of "niceness" is based on my individual sacrifice, negation of my real identity, and enchainment of my emotions. If I want to establish a common premiss of living, acting, thinking and sharing with others it has to be based on equality and not on the negation of my individuality, my identity and my self-assertion. I need to live in a reality based on my own perceptions not on one perceived through the eyes of others which, if it collapses, will leave me in a precarious, cold and unfriendly world, deaf to hopes and indifferent to my sufferings. I do not like to be accepted for the sake of acceptance. I like to be recognised as I am without strings, ideologies and manipulations. If the universe, as J. Monad argues, is "not pregnant of life, not the biosphere of man", and if I am only an insignificant speck, the blind combination of chance and the impertinence of nature, I, nevertheless, see my development as a movement of differentiation, not submergence to a group or the social ego, a movement towards self-realisation, not self-annihilation. Therefore, a "no syndrome" is a sign of a free consciousness confronting the gaol mentality of the "yes syndrome", the imprisonment s t by mother and father figures, by society, the state and the like.

For Anarchy,

Jack





The concept of the proletariat occupies the pivotal position in Marx' thought, for it is this class which will be the vehicle for the emancipation of all humanity.

This article is mainly a re-examination of Marx's theory of the proletariat and its historical role. This first part will discuss the nature of the concept and the historical irony by which Marx's apparently ill-chosen name for the industrial working class is being vindicated by contemporary economic events but the classless society seems as far away as ever. Automation now threatens to turn an ever-increasing proportion of the population into a class of economically useless beggars dependent for subsistence on the state, that is into something remarkably like the original proletariat of ancient Rome. In the USSR the elimination of capitalism has indeed led to the development of a proletariat and of dictatorship in the name of the proletariat but which alienates the proletariat from all control over the means of production more completely than has been possible in capitalist economies. The next section will go on to consider some genuine "dictatorships of the proletariat" in Marx's sense. The first of these - and which seems to have inspired the concept - was, of course, the Paris Commune. Since then periods of revolutionary enthusiasm in Europe have again and again thrown up similar phenomena. These include the Russian soviets of 1905 and 1917, the revolutionary factory management in Northern Italy in 1920 -to which Gramsci had so ambivalent a response -and, most important of all, the anarchist and socialist trade union federations which successfully ran the province of Catalonia -including the large industrial city of Barcelona- during the Spanish Civil War. More recently, similar forms of organization have been marked in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The appearance of this sort of spontaneous revolutionary organization was recognized as of fundamental relevance to Marx but has attracted little either of theoretical interest or practical support from later socialists.

Finally a concluding article will sketch out a few proposed alternatives to proletarianization.

It will be logical to begin with the question of why Marx chose to speak of the "proletariat" rather than simply "the working class" or the "people". As a classical scholar he was well aware of the status of the original proletarian. Engels, in fact, treats briefly of them (he calls them "so-called proletarians" as if to distinguish them from true proletarians) in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. The ancient Roman proletarian was a landless freeman whose name derived from the fact that he was productive of nothing but his children (proles = child). The proletariat contributed neither work nor taxes nor military service to the state and was excluded from the five recognized "classes" of society.

Marx was not the first to use the term with reference to the European poor, it had been in use from the seventeenth century to describe beggars and the poor outcasts of society, especially those with large families. Just those, in fact, whom Marx was to designate "lumpen-proletarian". This strange shift in meaning is the more remarkable because of the great stress Marx placed on the productive capacity of the industrial working class. The "labour theory of value" posits that virtually all the economic value of a product is derived from the labour that has gone into its manufacture. Although he certainly called the working class of his own time the proletariat, I should suggest that this was in anticipation of its historical destiny. It was the proletarianization of the mass of humanity, their alienation and dispossession of the wealth they had themselves created which created the logic and heightened the antithetical nature of the process by which they must liberate mankind and "expropriate the expropriators".

In a letter to Weydemeyer in 1852, Marx estimates the relative importance of his own contributions to the understanding of history:

> ...what I did that was new was to prove 1) that the existence of classes is a result of particular phases in the development of production; 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society.

Marx argues that for capitalism to develop it is necessary that it proletarianize the great mass of the people and alienate them from control over the means of production. Whereas the feudal "estates" had recognized mutual, though unequal, obligations and the serf had rights in, though not ownership of land, the capitalist would recognize no responsibility but that of contract. The sole property of the proletarian is his labour, which he must sell as a commodity on the market. The capitalist's interest is to keep wages down to a level just sufficient to allow labour to subsist and to reproduce. Such "surplus value" as is created by labour but not paid in wages is appropriated as profit but in reducing its labourers to proletarians capitalism "nurtures within itself the seeds of its own destruction."

> Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolize all advantages of the process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, degradation, exploitation; but with this grows too the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers and disciplined,

united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself.

Marx, Capital

The worsening periodic crises or "contradictions" of capitalism also lead inexorably to its collapse. Marx "stood Hegel on his feet", in that he held that ideas were derived from experience of material reality; he retained, however, the philosophic vocabulary of essential analogy between material and intellectual events. Thus there are "contradictions" in capitalism and the processes of historical change proceed by the opposed terms of "dialectical materialism" (from the Greek, "dialektikos" = an argument).The dialectic develops because a thesis creates its own antithesis (as capitalism must create the proletariat). It is resolved as synthesis on the higher plane of a new "mode of production", which has always, in the past, then become the thesis of the next historical stage. The triumph of the proletariat, however, is to be the last of these syntheses. Whereas "All previous historical movements were movements of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious,independent movement of the vast majority" (Communist Manifesto). The proletarjat will move with the whole human race from tthe "realm of necessity" to the "realm of freedom". Note that this logical consequence can only follow if the proletariat constitutes the vast majority.

According to Marx the continued existence of the state and bureaucracy are incompatible with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Marx's view of the state is directly opposed to that of Hegel for whom the state is the synthesis of the thesis "family" and its antithesis "civil society". The state is not a means, as is civil society, but an end- even the ultimate end. It is "the march of God in the world".

For Marx, by contrast, the state is born of conflict. It is the "state parasite, feeding upon and clogging the free movement of society". Its organs are the means of oppression and coercion;the police, the army and the bureaucracy. The very nature of the state consists in violence. Marx's views bring to mind Weber's similar definition of the state as enjoying a monopoly of legitimate violence but that Marx would deny its legitimacy.

The state, at least in capitalist society, is, however, usually spoken of as unimportant in itself; as lacking the possibility of autonomous existence The scheme of the dialectic will allow of only one major counter force to the proletariat. The state is part of the superstructure reflecting the capitalist mode of production, a mere tool of the capitalists. That is why it must desappear once capitalism is overthrown. It is "Nothing more than the form of an organization which the bourgeois necessarily adopt for internal and external purposes, for the mutual guarantee of their property and interest." (Marx, The German Ideology)

Although Marx generally speaks of the state as a marginal excrescence, without interests or motive force of its own, there are significant exceptions. In the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, for example, he is aware that the state is pursuing policies of its own, but argues that this is only possible because it temporarily holds the balance of power.

..by way of exception, however, periods occur in which the warring

> classes balance each so neatly that the state power,as ostensible mediator, acquires for the moment a certain degree of independence of both.

If such periods are the exceptional outcome of particular circumstances, of more moment theoretically are Marx's observations on the "Asiatic mode of production". In Asia the people are typically "under direct subordination to a state which stands over them as their landlord and simultaneously as sovereign."

> ..the state is then the supreme lord. Sovereignty here consists in the ownership of land concentrated on a national scale. But on the other hand, no private ownership of land exist, though there is both private and common possession of land. (Marx, Preface to A Contribution to The Critique of Political Economy).

As Miliband concludes:

> It is therefore evident that Marx does view the state, in the conditions of Asiatic despotism as the dominant force in society, independent of and superior to all its members, and that those who control its administration are society's authentic rulers. (Miliband, Marx and the State.)

It is evident, of course, that state ownership of the means of production does not, in Marx's eyes, bear any resemblance to socialism. On the contrary, after a brief transitional period, itself extremely democratic in nature. the state must disappear in a socialist country. This is worth stressing because there have been many changes since Engels could remark, as a matter of course, that: "All socialists are agreed that the political state and with it political authority will disappear as the result of the coming social revolution." There are now many socialists, and even professed Marxists whos seem to believe that state control is not only compatible but synonymous with socialism.

But if the state is capable of persisting in the absence of a separate ruling class; if it can itself take over the means of production and so constitute itself a ruling and exploiting class, then there is no necessity that it will wither away with the destruction of capitalism. It may, like a latter-day oriental despotism conveniently combine the two modes of exploitation, with disastrous results for the proletariat. The realisation of just this possibility informed early criticism of Marx by other socialists, especially the anarchists. If as Clegg in his Theory of Power and Organization says:"It is an acknowledged fact that neither Marx nor subsequent Marxist theorists have produced a specific theory of power or of politics." This deficiency is most crucial in the need to re-appraise the Marxian theory of the state.

At the time Marx wrote, even the recongnition of long enduring actual instances of the state's combining economic with political oppression did not seem relevant to the fate of the capitalist state. No one, after all, expected socialism to emerge from an oriental despotism, and it was not believed possible that the capitalist state could survive the class it represented.

> As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection ... nothing more remains to be repressed, and a special

> repressive force, a state, is no longer necessary. The first act by virtue of which the state constitutes itself the representative of society - the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society - this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a state. State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous and then dies out of itself, the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production -the state is, not 'abolished', it dies out.
>
> Engels,Socialism, Utopian and Scientific.

Bakunin, among others, was doubtful that the state would so easily disappear:

> If the proletariat is to be the ruling class over whom will it rule? The answer is that there will be a new proletariat which will be sublected to this new dominion. this new state.
> The Marxists say, this elected minority will consist of workers. Yes, indeed, of ex-workers, who once they become rulers or representatives of the people, cease to be workers and begin to look down on the toiling people. From that time on they represent not the people but themselves and their own claims to govern the people.
>
> (Bakunin, quoted in Maximoff).

Lenin, however, at the time of writing State and Revolution (1917), is convinced of the necessity to destroy the state: ".. all revolutions which have occurred up to now have helped to perfect the state machine whereas it must be smashed, broken."

> It is clear that the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible, not only without a violent revolution but also without the destruction of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class and which is the embodiment of this alienation.

Marx speaks approvingly of the anti-bureaucratic structure of the Paris Commune of 1871 but generally gives little attention to bureaucracy itself. The state is to disappear and though "the bureaucracy holds the state.. in thrall as its private property." the bureaucracy must accompany the state into oblivion. Since his time, if the nature of the state itself has received scant attention from Marxists the question of bureaucracy has received a great deal. For Lenin the increasing bureaucratisation of the Party was a sign of "the immaturity of socialism" and, as such, ephemeral. Both he and Trotsky denied it an "organic" position. As the bureaucracy, too, must inevitably "wither away", there could be no urgency in curtailing it here and now. The Italian Marxist, Bruno Rossi, in his book the Bureaucratisation of the World, in 1939 advanced the thesis that the bureaucracy was a "new class" exploiting the proletariat.Similar theories were developed by Burnham in his Managerial Revolution, and, more recently, by Milovan Djilas in the New Class.

At first sight it would seem that Marx's historical predictions have proved totally false. As Przewrsky sums it up:

> the proletariat was not and never became, a numerical majority of any society. The prediction that the displaced members of the middle class would either become proletarians or join the army of unemployed did not materialize -and he notes that - according to the Communist Manifesto the lawyer, the poet, the man of science, were being converted into proletarians.
>
> (Przeworski,Social Democracy as a Social Phenomenon).

Now it is certainly true that the proletariat has not been progressively emiserated and reduced to desperation, as was expected by Marx. It is also true that most people living in advanced capitalist economies do not think of themselves as proletarians, or vote as proletarians. However, if we take the essential defining feature of the proletariat to be not its low social status but its economic status, then it is true that the great majority is alienated from control over the means of production. Even the professional ('the lawyer, the man of science,' if not 'the poet') are increasingly employees of the state or large combines. And now automation is continually reducing the market value of labour and most skills.

Marx had already foreseen some of the consequences of automation. While admitting its consequences for the labour theory of value, however, he fails to discuss its effects on the class struggle. Rather he enlarges in a rather Utopian spirit on the potentially liberating effect of the machine, as it might effect life in an already-realized classless society:

> To the extent that large-scale industry develops, the creation of real wealth comes to depend less on labour time and the quantity of labour expended, than upon the power of the instruments which are set in motion during labour time, whose powerful effectiveness is likewise unrelated to the labour-time directly involved in their production but depends rather upon the general state of science and the progress of technology or the application of this science to production... labour no longer appears as an integral part of the process of production... the surplus labour of the masses has ceased to be a condition for the development of wealth in general, just as the non-labour of the few has ceased to be a condition for the development of the general powers of human mind.
>
> Marx, Grondrisse.

To anyone who consistently takes a class-struggle view of history, however, automation provides no cheerful prospect for the proletariat. It involves the loss of the only economic weapon this class possesses. Under all past economies slaves, serfs, or wage-slaves, however badly treated, had to be maintained as a necessary part of the mode of production. The only capital of the proletariat as such was its labour and its ultimate weapon in the class struggle was the threat to withdraw this labour. Where labour is redundant what power can remain to the proletariat? Automation can be seen as another industrial revolution, continuing the process of alienation of the proletariat. First the proletariat is called into being, losing in the process all claim to control the means of production, then it is made redundant dependent on the state and a handful of technocrats who alone

are necessary to the functioning of the economy.

The contemporary proletariat would seem then to have the prospect of actually reduplicating the status of the original, ancient Roman proletariat in becoming dependent on public charity for its subsistence. The Roman case is our only historical precedent for the support of a large permanent class of powerless parasites, and the proletariat was far from being a majority of the population. It is at best an insecure and insatisfactory state, although the Roman proles were at least supported above subsistence level, being given circuses as well as bread. Regular distribution of food was, however, confined to the City of Rome itself, proles in other areas remaining dependent on private charity.

S. Maddock.

The Politics Of Obedience

ETIENNE DE LA BOETIE AND THE PRESENT

> Nothing appears more surprising to those who consider human affairs with a philosophical eye, than the easiness with which the many are governed by the few; and the implicit submission, with which men resign their own sentiments and passions to those of their rulers. When we enquire by what means this wonder is effected, we shall find, that, as Force is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them but opinion. It is therefore, on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and military governments, as well as to the most free and most popular.
>
> David Hume

Long before the work on the authoritarian personality Etienne de La Boetie (1) asks a fundamental question:why do people obey tyrants? The significance of this question and his answers would, of course, be somewhat dated (though still of interest) if it was not possible to generalize from 'tyrant' to 'government'. This generalization his work does allow, however, and it is this generalization that interests us here, as it has interested others: a number of anarchist writers have drawn on the Discourse, though it may be wrong to label La Boetie an anarchist, and Leo Tolstoy in his doctrine of non-violent anarchism quotes extensively from the work.

What is intended here is basically an indication of La Boitie's ideas in his answers to the question above and an attempt to relate these ideas to contemporary practices.

One of the most surprising, and at the same time perhaps disappointing, aspects of the Discourse (it was written in the 1500's) is that the devices by which obedience is obtained and preserved are remarkably similar in principle to those which obtain today: mere custom and habit; a depreciation and discouragement of real eduction; the provision of mind-destroying entertainments; the perpetuation of a system in which some people can indeed 'make good'; and the 'adoration' of leaders or leadership styles. We can take these in turn.

'Custom and habit' is both cause and effect in La Boetie's analysis. It just so happens that we have a social system in which there is considerable control over even trivial aspects of our lives (what sounds we are permitted to utter, how we are to address certain people). And it just so happens that even the most fundamental 'givens' of social life are arbitrary; that is, could be otherwise. Indeed, it is when the predominant view of reality, the predominant metaphysic if you like, is questioned that we observe significant social change. For La Boetie the fundamental fact of political life, and a fact that does not penetrate the consciousness of the very great majority of people, is that governmental power rests on consent, and that we do, consent; not consciously and in terms that might make a 'contract', but unconsciously through habit and a slavish obedience to past customs and traditions. We are ideed apathetic, but not in the superficial sense of not caring about some particular issue that some advocate urges out of a particular interest; rather apathetic in its true sense of being 'without feelings'.

Custom and habit also function, however, in a second fashion; they become 'causal' or legitimatising elements for particular practices -we must/ought do certain things because they have always been done that way, there is some unwritten code compelling us. Indeed, Max Weber in his analysis of authority identifies one of the three bases on which authority is rationalised, (legal-rational, traditional,charisma) as: an appeal to establish belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority under them.

For La Boetie freedom is a 'natural right' and his position is planted squarely in a theory of natural law. He does not approach the issue of consent in the fashion of Hobbes (where we consent to the authority of individuals) or of Rousseau (where we consent to some mystical General Will). Rather La Boetie's observations are of 'here and now' instances of an habitual obedience where contract cannot be shown, nor in many cases any advantage that would suggest any General Will was operating, (certainly not operating in a positive, or even benign fashion).

Why then do we consent? Or given that we do so by mere custom and habit, how does this come about? The chief cause, La Boetie suggests, is education, or rather, the discouragement of education. To illustrate this let me contrast two views of education: education as mere technology and education as understanding. The first is typified by the ancient Sophists for whom education meant training in certain skills; education was a 'transmission of knowledge' and the outcome someone with information, 'facts' and an acquaintance with 'the best that has been written and said'; or, to take an example from the author of the paper on which I draw here: "perhaps the magnificent Hippias, inventor of the reference book, the art of mnemonics and the quiz programme is a fitting apotheosis of this conception of what education might be: skill, information, conditioned conformity... and a total inability to grasp inductive generalisation (2)." By contrast, and typified by Socrates himself is a conception of education as enquiry. Here the aim is simply to 'find out', rather that to 'convince' or to advocate or to lead to certain views of the world.

Now, if we ask what forms of education prevail today, (while they are much more formal than in La Boetie's day, at least as far as the masses are concerned) the answer for the most part is the first above, education as mere technology. Indeed, if all of the vocal and less vocal critics of contemporary education agree on one thing it is this observation that contemporary education aims at fitting the individual to the given scheme of social arrangements: to ask 'how is it best done?' rather than 'is it worth doing?' (Sometimes, to be sure, the critic is keen to supplant one particular view of the world with another, rather than to expose particularity -but that is another story).

In the context of present interests a good indication of the tendency to use education to strengthen obedience, is the expression used to describe contemporary education: 'the conversion of intelligence to the service of power'. The young are to be taken and moulded to be 'good citizens', useful members of society who 'salute their flag, honour their God and serve their queen'.

Beyond custom and habit, preserved through a particular conceptualisation of education, another mechanism in engineering consent is 'circuses'. Again, La Boetie draws attention to practices that we too can identify. In Roman times the use of the circus was obvious as a strategy to deflect attention from important issues; in La Boetie's time the spectacle surrounding both Church and State served the same purpose. Now, as well as the occasional real circus as in a royal wedding, we have the mass entertainment industry.Through entertainment, essentially devoid of significant social or political comment, or presenting distorted versions of events as in a John Wayne interpretation of the Vietnam war, we are united in a mindless conformity. Quiz programmes promise considerable rewards for remembering facts as difficult as the price of some comodity; the personal doings of millionaires and their dynasties how they are 'real people'; and leisure activities are changed so as to fit schedules for commercials on television. Not strange then, that since about the mid-1950's, from Jaques Ellul's The Technological Society to Herbert Marcuse's One Dimensional Man, a major line of criticism has been emerging; surprising, however, that La Boetie identified these tendencies, their intentions, and their consequences so long ago; and understandable if he and later writers are correct, that on the one hand he and they are relatively unknown, and that on the other, very little happens about all of these things.

In addition to education and entertainment, united to ensure conformity and submissiveness, La Boetie noted the sy stem of patronage, the establishment of a hierarchy of subordinates who receive real benefits from the system. This was the real mainspring of domination,a large group of people who are not merely deluded by education and entertainment. but who make real profits from attending to the tyrant, or in turn, attending to the needs of those who attend to the tyrant, and so on. Generalising again to the present, this same system is in evidence. In a small way there is still a group who through priviiege of birth or whatever represent an elite of wealth; but more importantly there is an elite of power which rests on the possession of information, that information in turn being relevant to

the existing system. And there is the bureaucracy, a large group who manage the information and filter down so much as will not too greatly disturb the system. In this way too the notion of 'the expert' arises; an issue like nuclear weaponry and nuclear warfare is placed beyond the reach of the average person and even opponents have to advertise their own experts to balance those of the other side. Yet in those areas of living which seem closer to what it is to be living there can be no experts: areas like morality, sensuality, humour, love and death. More down to earth, however, is the observation now widely accepted by political scientists (experts?) that a major factor in the collapse of the Australian government in 1974 was the failure of a Public Service (built up over 23 years of Liberal rule) to co-operate with a political philosophy they could not, by reason of accident or their own privileged position, share.

And finally, La Boetie notes a 'cult of personality', the manner in which a tyrant is fawned over and 'adored', indeed in some cases made into a god. Retainers flatter the tyrant who surrounds himself with various trappings of office, distancing himself from the rest of the people whose comparisons of their lives with his leave them properly chastened and reminded of their lowly status. This point is a little more difficult to relate to times more familiar to us, but a little reflection discloses an analogous practice. 'Leaders' are now considered in terms of their personal characteristics or abilities -being a good speaker, a good drinker, 'tough but fair', 'you always know where you stand with him' and etc.; aspects that detract attention from the fact that what he is doing is very likely not in your best interests and is not what you wanted. We now speak of 'leadership styles' and how one might train leaders - but seldom do we question whether there should be leaders; and we marvel at the diplomatic skills of experts who jet around the world solving one crisis after another. We do not turn our politicians into personal gods, but we do notice a close bond between Church and State in the West (as well as in some parts of the East), we start the deliberations of our parliament with a prayer, and in war, of course god is always on our side.

Through education (or at least one form of it), through entertainments, through a system of heirarchy of benefits and power, and through the 'adoration' of leaders a system resting on consent is ensured; not consent in the sense of contract, which has always had its problems as a notion in political philosophy, but simply consent through custom and habit, and we might say, ignorance.

What is to be done? For La Boetie the main strategy, as for many libertarians today, is eduction, real education that unmasks the situation and first alerts people to the fundamental fact that government rests on consent; then withdrawal of consent if appropriate. More generally however, a digression to an idea of Georges Sorel is useful. Sorel, first identifies certain features in the producers, features like care for precision and a rejection of the need for reward, features that he says summarise to 'disinterestedness' or pursuing an activity 'for its own sake' (scientists, warriors and artists also emody these features). Then he indicates that the only way to preserve these features against the destructive ethic of the consumers

(where profit, reward and acquisitiveness predominate) is for the producers to 'withdraw', to associate with their own, provide models for the young to follow, and to reject the alien 'education in letters' (or nowadays the 'education in science' where 'science' means technological applications to solve practical problems to ensure profits etc) that only convinces them they are deficient and inferior, and should obey.

Now, this strategy has been questioned and revolution preferred; but this has its own difficulties. One problem is that of creating 'revolutionary consciousness', presumably by 'educational' methods. The general problem, however, is shown in Max Stirner's comparison between insurrection and revolution. Insurrection refers to a 'coming to awareness', an attitude of mind in which one becomes the active organizer of one's own life, not dependent on or submissive to others or to institutions. By contrast, revolution refers to the overthrow of existing conditions, a political act that involves the making of some new social arrangements: revolutions involve the choice between this or that ordering of social relationships, insurrections aim at a resistance to being 'ordered' -at least by others.

This, then, is an outline of La Boetie's Discourse, and his ideas related to the contemporary scene. What is at the base of all of this, of course, are some traditional problems in political theory around which a great deal has been written. A society obsessed with management and efficiency is not likely to help disseminate ideas that preach inefficiency and a refusal to be managed. or that proclaim 'manage things not people'. An occasional dose of these ideas can, however, be helpful and any thinker that is so important as to be ignored deserves an occasional revival. What is equally as important, however, is that we are not seduced by the alleged, or even real, complexity of social life away from fundamental questions. These are often put in the most succinct way by writers removed from the exigencies of the present.

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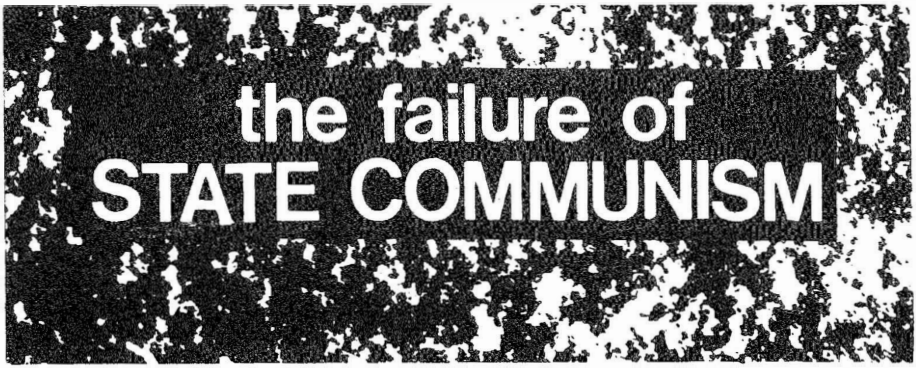
1. I take my knowledge of La Boetie from Murray N. Rothbard's edition of the Discourse. A brief biographical background from the same source is of value:
   Etienne de La Boetie was born in southwest France in 1530 into an aristocratic family, orphaned at an early age and reared by an uncle. In 1553 he graduated in law from the University of Orleans and was appointed to the Bordeaux assembly of lawyers despite his young age. He pursued a legal career as a judge and died in 1563 aged 32. If for anything, he is mainly remembered as the great friend of the essayist Michel de Montaigne. During his law-student days he wrote the Discourse de La Servitude Voluntaire, probably in his final year.

2. Richard S. Brumbough, Education and Reality: Two Revulutions, Tgought, 1973, No 188, 5-18.

- Bill Warren



CHAPTER IX

THE ESSENCE OF PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONS

Freedom and Socialism — R. Rocker

Often there is the explanation that the ruinous wars, which had plagued Russia for years, had contributed to creating a degenerate internal situation. This assertion, no doubt, contains some truth. Kropotkin in his Message to the Western workers drew attention to it. But stating this fact should not lead us to ignore the real causes of things. Without wars it would have been difficult for the Bolsheviks to give rein to their longings and there would have been more resistance by the people. No longer would the Bolsheviks have been able to justify all new limitations on freedom by the gravity of the situation. Just the same, their policy would have been dangerous to the revolution because it sprang from a hypothesis contrary to the most elementary tenant of the social revolution itself.

As belated followers of the Jacobins, the Bolsheviks started from the premiss that any social change ought to be imposed on the masses, from above. Having no faith in the constructive forces and capacity of the people, any initiative by the latter, without the political seal of the party, is viewed with hostility. This is the reason all institutions and associations created by the workers' and peasants' masses displease them and, therefore, at the first opportunity they have tried to limit the independence of the people and make them subservient to a central authority, as is the case with the soviets and the trade-unions. Other organizations, such as the co-operatives, are totally destroyed. The Bolsheviks have tried to rebuild them but, naturally, under the auspices of the state because, as Lenin explained :"The relationship between the State and capitalism is to establish a better control.

This deeply rooted mistrust of all initiatives at the grass roots level can explain the Bolshevik fanatical predilection for decrees. The fetish of the art to govern held by their representatives, has replaced the revolutionary action of the people. As a result a monstrous epidemic of "revolution-

ary decrees" and enactments has been spawned, sufficient to suffocate the most cunning jurist. This is the present state of affairs in Russia. Even if 99% of all those decrees are lost in various bureaux, the waves of paper do not decrease. No other government has ever put out so many decrees and enactments as the Bolshevik government. If the world is going to be saved by decrees, Russia will have no problem at all(1).One cannot but remember the marvellous words of Bakunin:

> I am, after all, categorically opposed to a revolution accomplished by decrees, which is nothing but the application of the idea of a 'Revolutionary state', that is to say, of reaction masked as revolution. To the method of revolutionary decrees I propose revolutionary facts, the only effective, logical and true ones. The authoritarian method which tries to impose freedom and equality from above, destroys them. The anarchist method of action provokes the facts, it awakes them in a definite way out of the medley of any official and authoritarian power. The former method of the 'revolutionary state' leads overtly to the final triumph of the reaction; the latter method realizes the revolution in a natural and unshakeable way.

Is it necessary for Bakunin's prophesy to be proven in such a tragic manner? It is difficult to believe it.

Borgeois revolution or revolution of the masses.

Only a person as totally ignorant of the latent creative forces in the bosom of the people as Lenin, could have taxed liberty as a "bourgeois prejudice". It is the Marxists' mania to see all past revolutions as bourgeois manifestations that inevitably lead them to such a concept. In the English, as well as the Great French Revolution, two currents are to be distinguished: the revolution of the people and the revolutionary movement of the bourgeoisie. In the main revolutionary events those currents, to some extent, pursued their own aims. Without the peoples' revolution, that is, without the great movement of the peasantry and the proletarian population of the cities, the feudal system and the absolute monarchy could never have been abolished in France. The initial aim of the bourgeoisie was to establish a constitutional monarchy along the English model, coupled with a modest easing of the burden of feudal charges. They would have been satisfied to share the power with the aristocracy.Camille Desmoulins words that "There were no more than a dozen republicans before 1789" described the real state of affairs. It was the uprising of the peasants and the workers of the cities that pushed the revolution forward. It was this fact that the bourgeoisie fought energetically. Despite the resistance with which the bourgeoisie opposed it, it was the people's revolution which abolished the feudal system and destroyed the absolute monarchy. That the bourgeoisie prevailed at the end and took over power does not prove, by any means, that the revolution itself was bourgeois. It would be sufficient to mention the movement of the Enrages and the conspiracy of Babeuf to convince oneself that in the depth of the people there were forces at work that could not, in any way, be qualified as bourgeois.

The revolutionary action of the masses forced the bourgeoisie, despite its aim at the outset,to guarantee to the citizens certain rights and freedom, at least at the legislative level, which they would never have granted voluntarily. We know that the representatives of the bourgeoisie had always looked, and continue to look even today, to limit those rights, to make them ephemeral and to a great extent illusory, by subtle subterfuges and, if necessary, to violate them directly. It is a well established fact that the workers of all countries had and are continuing to have, a tough struggle to obtain the right of organization, strikes, assemblies and freedom of thought and expression. All the rights that we have in capitalist countries are not due to the good will of the bourgeoisie but, on the contrary, they have been snatched from them by incessant struggle. They are the results of great revolutionary fights which have cost much blood and the lives of the masses. To try to get rid of them now, by declaring them to be "bourgeois prejudice", only favours the despotism.

We do not have any illusions about the real meaning of those rights and we know quite well that, in most so-called "free countries", they are extremely limited and have only relative value as far as the workers are concerned. Lenin is saying nothing new on this subject. But, the fact remains that the workers in the capitalist countries can benefit from those rights to a certain degree, while the Russian working class under the Bolshevik dictatorship has absolutely no such rights.

The longing of the masses.

In the bosom of the masses, in any great social upheaval two tendencies can be observed albeit with some confusion and a lack of precision: the desire for social equality and, above all, the desire for personal liberty. It may be argued that the latter has always been the moving force of each revolution. It is not always bread and butter issues that put the masses in motion:the more the feeling of human dignity is developed the better these ideals are articulated. A glance at everyday struggles of our times indicates that strike after strike are taking place, not for material conditions, but as a reaction to the sacking of a comrade, or, to get rid of a foreman who does not respect sufficiently the dignity of a worker etc. Furthermore, many struggles are not simply in reaction to wants but are part of a prepared plan.

Those who, like the Bolsheviks, ignore the deepest desire for personal freedom in man do not grasp one of the most elementary forces in human revolutions. Bolshevism, by its own nature, is hostile to freedom hence its fanatical hate of all other socialist tendencies which are favourable to the free manifestation of the masses. Its most eminent representatives, perceive socialism within the barrack or penitentiary framework.

To illustrate these affirmations we quote, one among many examples, the following words of Bukharin:" The proletarian coercion that goes from summary executions to forced labour, paradoxically as it may appear to be, is the method of transforming the human material of the capitalist epoch into communist humanity."

One can hold one's head in one's hands and ask: Is the man who uttered these words in complete control of his senses? Unfortunately for Mr. Bukharin he has to understand that he and his friends also belong to "human material of the capitalist epoch" and it will be necessary for him and his friends to be transformed too: as quickly as possible, if we judge from the words we have just quoted.

Unwillingly one is reminded of Torquemada who, with tears in his eyes, used to accompany his victims to the butcher, realizing that the "human material" of his time could only be "transformed" into virtuous saints through purification by flames. While the aim of Torquemada was the triumph of the Holy Church and that of Bukharin "the communist humanity", both methods are a result of similar mentality.

These words cannot be taken as an expression of a degenerate brain in which desire engenders thoughts, they are something worse, they are a sad reality. In Russia, under Bolshevik domination, work is militarized completely and undertaken under conditions of iron discipline. A communist worker has written in The Metalurgist 13 : "In the plant of P. of Kostama, total submission to the director has been introduced. Workers are prohibited to look and talk. The committee's instructions are the same as those of the bosses. Absence without the permission of a superior, means deprivation of supplementary rations. Refusal to work overtime is punishable in the same way. If one persists to refuse -arrest follows; if one is late at work the fine is equal to two weeks pay."

Discipline and Workers' rebellion.

By a series of decrees the Soviet Government has tried to persuade the workers that it is necessary, and in the interest of the nation, to introduce military discipline in the factories, but the workers are not convinced of such a necessity. Since the 1920's there has been a series of strikes against the militarization of labour, which envelopped virtually all industries in the country. The Central Committee of Statistics of the Secretariat of Works has provided us with the following statistics as to the size of the movement.

1. 77% of the strikes occurred in big and middle enterprises.
2. 90% of the strikes were in nationalized enterprises.
3. In the period under consideration there were two to three strikes in the same plant.
4. The town most hit was Petrograd, the least - Kazan.

A poster by the striking workers of Petrograd expresses the mood of the strikers as follows: " It is as if we are condemned to forced labour. All, except eating, is to be done according to prescribed rules. We are not free, we are slaves."

In the report of the peasants and workers survey on prison reform in Moscow, in July 1920 it is stated that "in the prison of Mutirkin there are 152 workers from the plant "Briansky" who were arrested for participating in 1st of March strike and are not interrogated yet."

All these strikes were brutally suppressed by the Soviet Government and many workers were executed under military law. In every work-shop and factory workers are watched by communist informers. Anyone who dares to express his dissatisfaction with the actual state of affairs risks imprisonment. Thus the working class are terrorized and any slight inclination to express oneself freely is suppressed. This shameless tyranny appears to Bukharin and his comrades as the only method "to transform the human material of the capitalist epoch into communist humanity".

We ought to make sure that a similar method is never imposed on us because, in our opinion, results thus obtained are contrary to what their followers claim them to be. The Bolshevik bitter experiment has justified our fears. Their method does not at all approximate "communist humanity" but rather it compromises communism and further postpones its realization. Instead of leading to "communist humanity" it is alarmingly approaching capitalism and, thus, is destroying the conditions needed to "transform the human material of the capitalist epoch "into what Bukharin and his friends are talking about.

The Bolsheviks against the initiative of rank and files.

"The dictatorship of the proletariat", without any contradictions, shows the capacity to create a new dominant class and to make Russia the most enslaved country in the world but, as far as the organization of economic and social life is concerned, it has failed miserably. True, the obstacles to such an organization were many: the terrible war of about 7 years, the lack of raw materials, lack of equipment and railways were obstacles for which the Bolsheviks were not to be blamed. Surely, to reconstruct the whole economic life on new bases is an immense task and any sensible person will agree with that. Nonetheless, this task ought to be tackled immediately if the future of the revolution is to be assured.

We blame the Bolsheviks for their method of violence which systematically excludes all possibility of solving it and, instead, has transformed economic life into a pile of rubble. By opposing all initiatives that come from the masses, the Bolsheviks have destroyed the constructive forces of the revolution. Thus, in dusty offices where the spark of the revolutionary will is suffocated, the monstrous bureaucracy is born. The faithful disciples of Marx, the Bolsheviks, tried to organize big industry first and neglected the medium sized enterprises which hindered their efforts at centralization. It is a well known fact that big enterprises are not profitable unless remarkably well directed. This direction was particularly difficult in a country like Russia where the forces capable of organizing the supervision of the industrial complexes were not well-developed. The Bolshevik bureaucratic make-up complicated the task because the specialists had to be subordinated to ignorant commissars whose only merit was to be members of the Communist Party. Thus, at the inception, all personal initiatives were eliminated and work was regulated by dead schemes. In the case of big industries the fiasco was even greater.

The capitalist owners return.

The rapid decline of small and medium-sized enterprises was very evident, so that the Russian co-operative association suggested to the government that they should take the direction of such enterprises,. One would think that such a proposition would be willingly accepted by a government which intended to build the road to socialism. The co-operatives had a remarkable organizational capacity. They had knowledge in administrative matters. They could have become an excellent mediator between the cities and the country due to their numerous membership in towns. This was exactly what the the government did not want: a tie between peasants and workers without the commissars was a monstrosity contrary to all laws of bureaucracy. Thus the proposition of the co-operatives was rejected flatly. Nonetheless, the capitalist owners, who before the revolution had employed in their factories less than 300 workers, were given their property back. This was intended to develop the productive activities of the small enterprises. Thus, what was refused to the co-operatives once was given to the capitalists and the rights of the latter reestablished.

This example is a typical one. it throws sufficent light on the monstrosity of an absurd method which, according to its no less absurd followers, will eventually bring about communism. In fact the same method has caused complete disintegration of the workers at the work place. It reduces them to galley-slaves who lack personal control over their labour and are unconditionally subservient to the orders of their superiors. It kills all sense of responsibility in them and any awareness of common interest. Forced labour is not a means to excite in man liking and love for work. That is possible only if the sentiment of liberty and the development of personal responsibility binds each individual to the interest of the others. Charles Fourier's marvellous theory of "attractive work" had no application in the Soviet Republic in the grip of Jacobinism. In his letter to the workers of Western Europe, Kropotkin declares:

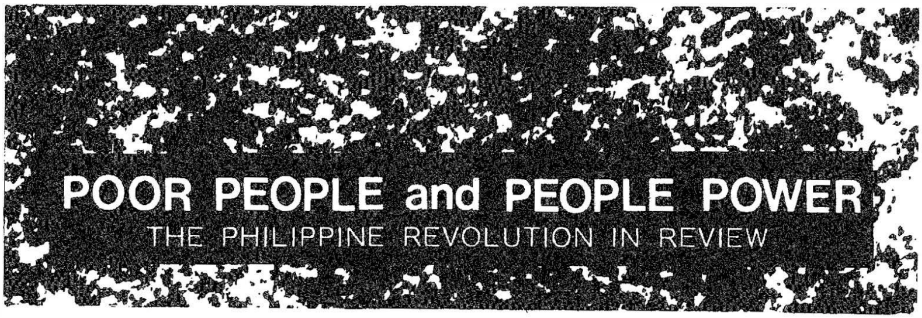
> We are learning to know in Russia how not to introduce communism, even with a people tired of the old regime and offering no active resistance to the experiments of the new rulers... the idea of such councils controlling the economic and political life of the country is a great idea... But as long as the country is governed by a party dictatorship, the workers' and peasants' councils evidently lose their entire significance. They are reduced to the passive role formerly played by "The States General", when they were convoked by the king and had to combat an all-powerful royal council. A council of workers ceases to be free and of any use when liberty of the press no longer exists, and we have been in that condition for two years, under a pretext that we are in a state of war. But more still. The workers' and peasants' councils lose their significance when the elections are not preceded by a great electoral campaign, and when the elections are conducted under pressure by a party dictatorship. Naturally, the usual excuse is that a dictatorship is inevitable in order to combat the old regime. But such a state of affairs is evidently a step backwards, since the revolution is committed to

the construction of a new society on a new economic base. It means the death-knell of the new system.

Today, we know that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" is a failure in all domains related to the real fulfilment of socialist demands, the revolution is stifled and the tyranny of the previous despotic system has been developed to its extreme. It is here that the tragic significance of future history lies.

(to be continued)

1) Lenin himself has now understood that the time of decrees has passed as his speech at the Conference on Political Education demonstrates : "Everybody sees the decrees by the Soviet Government and the Communist Party in relation to the New Political Economy to contain essentially more old elements that the previuous political economy. From now on land tax will replace requisition. Handling out concessions to foreign capitalists and capitalist farmers is to a certain extent capitalist restoration. The question is whom the peasantry will follow: the proletariat that tries to build socialist society or the capitalists,the easier way. In this struggle the government of the proletariat has to improve the economic level of the population and supported by the proletariat which, in a parallel direction, believe in the restoration of industry. Thus the question to be posed is: will capitalism organize itself quickly and communists cave in or will the government of the proletariat, supported by the peasantry, show the ability to keep the capitalists at an appropriete distance and create capitalism subservient to the state and its services. This struggle will be tougher, more pittiless than the one against Kolchak and Denikin, because now the enemy does not show his face but is invisible in our own ranks. To win, we need to organize the small peasants, develop their productive forces and protect them by all means possible, otherwise the capitalists will keep them subservient.On this the outcome of the struggle depends. In an impoverished country like ours, the struggle between nascent socialism and capitalist development is a question of life and death in which all sentimentality is forbidden. Russian capitalists, foreign concessionists and their farmers want to make 100% profit. Let them enrich themselves, but we have to learn economy from them because otherwise we cannot build a viable communist republic. The time of apprenticeship is tough and difficult but there is no other way because the technology of big industry is highly superior. The time of decrees and proclamations are over. Now we have to acquire political experience and to work practically. Either the political achievements of the soviet power will be condemned to disappearance or we will have secure them through a firm economic base. Likewise we have to achieve a level of organization to be able to fight with success the two traditional Russian evils: bureaucracy and corruption. We have to fight 3 enemies: one, the communist assumption that all can be regulated by the simple publication of decrees without any corresponding realisation in practice; secondly - ignorance; and thirdly - corruption."



C.J. Mc Gillion

It is now over a year since the mass public demonstrations against Marcos and defections within his own coalition of political and military allies to gether made possible what has become known as the Philippine Revolution. With continuing popular support for Gory Aquino and with the sustained backing of the army under General Ramos and less crucially, but still significantly, the Church hierarchy, prospects for the Revolution are encouraging. But this is a Revolution that is severely limited in both its impact and the benefits that it distributes. In a country where three-quarters of all households have incomes on or below the poverty line, where 60 %of children are malnourished, there appears to be little evidence that this Revolution threatens the essential social structure or the power relations that derive from it.

The Philippine Revolution was a response to particular problems created under Marcos. Its direction and its agenda, therefore, remain fundamentally influenced by these problems. Put simply the Marcos regime was proving incompetent, excessively corrupt, and repressive and in each case it thus threatened the political, social and economic stability of the country.

Since 1972 per capita income in the Philippines had declined by 20%. Inflation had risen. Though an official figure of 5% was conceded for unemployment, underemployment probably accounted for as much as a further 25%, of the workforce. The country's foreign debt burden had become oppressive - by 1983 one-half of the country's export earnings was being devoured by interest payments to overseas creditors.

Nevertheless the Marcos family, together with friends and political cronies, continued to prosper unashamedly. Fortunes were made from private foreign investors eager to have contracts negotiated and implemented. Bribery, rather than considerations of efficiency or cost effectiveness, determined the outcome of tenders. Local monopolies were established to secure stable and profitable markets for Marcos' allies: successful businesses were bought out and distributed as spoil to others. Personal and political favourites received competitive concessions from government agencies. These practices so distorted the local economy and so undermined local business confidence

that funds from business are known to have been diverted to the extreme left in the hope of generating enough pressure to force a change of government.

Marcos responded to the opposition that this environment created with repression. "Subversives" were detained without trial, the mass media was controlled, and even after martial law was lifted in 1981 the President continued to exercise his own personal discretion in legislating. The more endemic oppression in the countryside continued with still harsher instruments of repression. In 1972 the Armed Forces of the Philippines had numbered 58,000. By 1986 there were 158,000 regular troops and 100,000 reservists. Many of these troops in the countryside had become little more than the private armies of the landowners engaged less in the conflict against the New Peoples Army than they were in the class conflict against the peasants.

The Marcos regime then in both its incompetence and its attempts to contain a rising dissatisfaction in the Philippines quickly aliented its traditional supporters including, albeit slowly and reluctantly, Washington. Under Marcos the radicalisation of Filipino society was accelerating - the New Peoples Army had become operational in 62 of the country's 73 provinces - and only the President's own personal allies still retained a belief that the process could be reversed by him.

The Aquino alternative, on the other hand, represented a reformist. the economy. It also, importantly, was able to capture the public imagination, particularly in urban centres. With key institutions and especially the tion, particularly in urgan centres. With key institutions and especially the army emerging intact from the Marcos exodus the less extreme conservative forces in the country could be reasonably certain that any reforms would be contained within parameters that would strengthen, not destroy, the existing social and economic status quo. This was appealing to Washington as well. By good fortune rather than any expediencies on its part the US was delivered a moderate liberal government in Manila which enjoyed popular support, which promised to commit the military to its essential task of destroying the insurgency, and which could be hoped to promote an economic environment more conducive to the interests and operations of international capital. Thus was Aquino assured crucial US support in bi-lateral economic aid packages and within the multi-lateral financial institutions.

It is hardly surprising then that there has been little substantive social reform in the Philippines, particularly in the countryside. Here the almost feudal relationships of peasant to landlord remain untouched. Restrictions on peasant organizations - both legal and illegal - continue. The New Peoples Army, representing the main defence against oppression besides the more radical clergy - and the better armed of the two - refuses quite reasonably to surrender its arms and thereby deliver a permanent victory to oppressors who remain armed.

But if the Philippine Revolution thus looks increasingly to be more of an urban revolt it must be remembered that even in the cities large sections of the population remain within systems of exploitation and oppres-

sion that are tolerated if not condoned. A telling illustration of this fact may be found in the breaking of the strike among Filipino workers at the US bases - Clarke and Subic Bay - in 1986. Poorly paid indigenous workers had picket lines broken by local prostitutes -some of the 60,000 who live off the bases and the tourist trade - who had been mobilised by US military authorities exploiting their economic marginality.

Admittedly Aquino and fellow liberals have held only tenuously to a governing power since February 1986. Their efforts have largely been concentrated on entrenching a reformist government within a new constitutional democracy. This concern is of undeniable significance for reasons to do with the government's internal and external legitimacy. But in the final analysis the constitution is only one institution among many that influence the direction of events in the Philippines and the more entrenched institutions are also the more powerful and conservative such as the army or the established church. It is difficult to view Aquino's constitutional concerns as disguising an astute political manouvre to firmly ground support for fundamental reform in the country. That would take a stronger alignment with those forces committed to radical change - not all of which at present are represented by the political left - than the government shows an inclination toward. In the long run, nonetheless, only such an alignment could sustain mass popular support through the distribution of substantial benefits to the people. And only such an alignment could mobilise that support as an effective counterweight to a defensive reaction from the right. Aquino to date has successfully pursued the perceptions and preoccupations of the urban middle class she essentially represents. We have yet to witness the Revolution.

The main evil (of party politics) is, that it destroys initiative, quenches the individual rebellious spirit, teaches people to rely on some one else to do for them what they should do for themselves, what they alone can do for themselves; finally renders organic the anomalous idea idea that by massing supineness together until a majority is acquired, then, through the peculiar magic of that majority, this supineness is to be transformed into energy. That is, people who have lost the habit of striking for themselves as individuals, who have submitted to every injustice while waiting for the majority to grow, are going to become metamorphosed into human high-explosives by a mere process of packing!

Voltairine de Cleyre

FLAG TORCH & FIST

THE SYMBOLS OF ANARCHISM

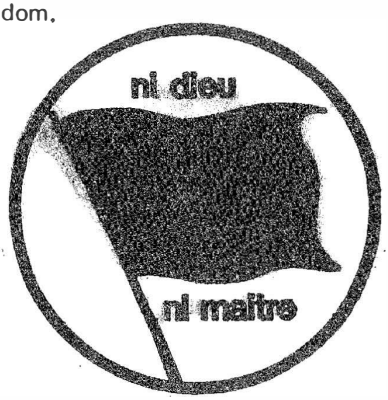
From the beginning anarchist symbolism has confined itself to the borrowing of individual symbols from the iconography of the international workers' movement, and has merely varied these in colour to use them in its own propaganda. In this way the three anarchist tendencies (anarcho-communism/anarcho-syndicalism/anarcho-individualism) have all reached back for their symbols, and not preferred one to another. An international comparison cannot show, though with perhaps one exception, that any other specific symbols are being used. All anarchist symbols stand out because of their simplicity, which has greatly facilitated their spread.

BLACK A common feature of the symbols used by anarcho-communists and -individualists is their pure black form. Black as a 'non-colour' expresses the rejection for everything which, according to the anarchist social ideal, prevents or constrains universal freedom.

BLACK/RED. Only anarcho-syndicalists combine the anarchist black with the syndicalist red. Red, as an aggressive, active and energetic colour, symbolizes the determination of the syndicalist activist towards total social transformation.

A IN A CIRCLE. The Ⓐ is seen as the most recent and, in terms of its impact, the most successful symbol in the whole field of political symbolism. Quite contrary to the widely-held view that this is a traditional anarchist symbol, the symbol was first used in 1964 by the editorial collective of the French paper "Jeunesses Libertaires" and was influenced by the death-rune-like Anti-Nuclear Death symbol designed by the English Gerald Horton. To some people it is simply a mark to indicate anarchist propaganda, to others it serves as a uniting symbol for all anarchist tendencies. No evidence has yet been found to support the common view that the Ⓐ is actually a very old and only recently rediscovered anarchist symbol. In particular the letter A assisted the symbol's rapid worldwide spread. The word for anarchy in all the world's languages begins with A, so no problems of recognition or understanding stand in the way. The circle, furthermore, as a symbol of unity and determination, lends support to the oft-proclaimed idea of international ararchist solidarity. This incredible simplicity and directness led the Ⓐ to become the accepted symbol of the restrengthened anarchist movement after the revolts of 1968. Now it and all its variations adorns not only the most varied pamphlets, but also many buildings and monuments.

FLAG and STAR. Probably the oldest anarchist symbols are the black flag anu the black star. Through their lack of any colour they have widely expressed for many centuries the will to total overthrow of the dominant social conditions. The flag itself is a symbol uniting formal simplicity with high emotional appeal. But the black flag is not a party flag — as a banner of upheaval and of rebellions it signals the desired end of all authority. The star can have the most varied, but always positive meanings. The black star, used exclusively in five-pointed form, embodies the anarchist spirit and unconditional drive towards freedom.



TORCH. The flaming torch in symbolism-rich political journalism symbolizes the striving for freedom, or symbolizes already-achieved freedom given as an example to other peoples. Furthermore, as an anarchist symbol, it stands for enlightenment, realization, and ideas of free thought. Occasionally, the flaming torch is said to be both a light of freedom leading out of the dark oppression and exploitation, and also an illustration of the creative spirit, rising phoenix-like from the destruction of all forms of domination.

FIST. The balled fist, which as a symbol of class struggle consciously emits aggression, is used only sparsely in anarchist iconography, and then clearly when aimed at intimidating the class enemy. So the fist is mainly found as a graphic representation of the call to smash all instruments of domination, a plain fist holding a black rose is sometimes used by anarchists as a symbol of solidarity. Two fists breaking a rifle are more commonly used in anti-militarist propaganda in order to lend more force to the slogan "Down with weapons".

ANARCHO. Probably the most original anarchist symbol is the Anarcho, a little man dressed totally in black with cloak down to the ground and wide-brimmed magician's hat, who is used both self-ironically by anarchists and derogatorily by their opponents. Often there are pictures of the anarcho fumbling around with a bomb, the fuse already alight. The symbol of "the black man" originates from the time of the Italian independence struggle in the 1830's. It represents a fighter from the Secret Federation of the Carbonari (charcoal burners), which was then struggling for Italian unity against the various forces

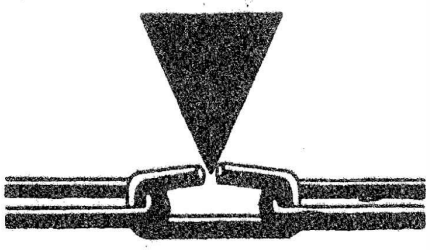
of occupation. In their uncounted uprisings and assassination attempts they

used round bombs which were shot out from cannon-like devices. After the freeing of Italy from centuries of foreign rule the Carbonari continued their struggle against domination. The symbol of the bomb-flinging Anarcho found its greatest use in anarchist propaganda in the era of "propaganda by deed" around the turn of the century, where sometimes simply a bomb with burning wick was represented.

WILDCAT. The symbol of the wildcat has been used since the 1920s solely in Anglo-America, where it was used as a call to wild strike. It was used in the early stages of the North American workers' movement by the Wobblies (International Workers of the World).

Today a group of anarchists in Britain draws wildcat comics for the anarchist monthly paper *Freedom*.

SABOT. Also from North America, but known only in the early days of the labour movement, was the wooden shoe. During strikes workers threw these shoes known as 'sabots' (read sabeh) into machinery to bring it to a halt. In this way SABOTage was introduced as a means of struggle in the conflict between Labour and Capital. The sabot appeared in anarchist publications until into the 1930s as a symbol of the call to sabotage. Today it is not used, a fact probably due to the lack of anarchist strength in the revolutionary workers' movement.



NEW SYMBOLS. More recently individual anarchist groups have tried creating new symbols. These reach back in their form at least to the cubism of the 1920s and 30s. The symbol of a wedge splitting a chain is seen as the only successful, strongly abstract design. Comrades from the Federation Anarchiste drew it in Paris, 1981, on the occasion of the anti-election festival "10 hours for anarchy". In any case it is exceedingly doubtful that any new symbol will for any reason be able to catch on. The symbolism of the A cannot be beaten!

Translated from German
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Some thoughts on the unemployed workers union & beyond

In looking at the general issue, and not the particular case, it is clear that there is no longer such a thing as an unemployed worker. This term is obsolete. Contemporary capitalism is disenfranchising the working class from any possible control as rapidly as possible, even when it is not economic. Functionally capitalist technology is aimed at removing people from the workplaces This point is obvious and not in contention. It is a one way process. The phrases "dole bludger" and "unemployed worker" are now (and have been for quite some time) meaningless and as such are so much dribble.

This delusion is understandable in proud and strong workers reduced to a life of beggery and in intellectual beggars such as Marxists etc. but not in anarchists of any ilk. Identification of the unemployed with the working class is due to having failed to notice the changing nature of capital, wakey wakey: wishful thinking, nice but not enough: and fasination in the power of the proletariat. Fasination in the power of the proletariat is too often fasination in the possibility of power. It is the logic of the dictatorship of the proletariat and is the antithesis of the social revolution. Such fasination has nothing to do with the real power of the working class when it grasps it's destiny in its own hands.

To just say wish you where here (with the working class heros) and condemn a huge number of persons to a walk on part in the war, rather than a lead role, full of rage, is to perpetuate powerlessness.

It also ignores and leaves untouched the organisation of the unemployeds real needs. The seeds of a new and necessary co-operative movement lie dormant in the unemployed. Time and energy, the great resources of the unemployed, for so long turned against them as bordom and purposelessness could be let loose in a great host of adventures. To concentrate instead on a workplace that has ceased to exist is absurd.

Whist such transferance (of a set of ideas pertaining to one situation to another dissimilar situation) is typical of Marxists (whose ideology embodies a hierarchy of status) is unnecessary among anarchists whose ideology embraces society as a whole. Anarchist history is full of examples of communalism, co-operativism and of organisations outside of the workplace. This is not to detract from the importance of anarchism within the workplace. These organizations are not rivals but additions to the depth and stength of the anarchist revolution. To see them as enemies is to see them as a Marxist, capitalist or christian would see them, that is the ideology of monopolist. The ideologies of the BHP, the dictatorship of the proletariat , the First Commandment are all basically the same. The illusion of there being only one way to paradise (working class section or otherwise) is an old one but that one way street, with that correct line running straight down the middle, is a dead end my friend. But YPU and I we've been trhough that, and this is not our fate, but the riders are approaching and the hours getting late.

There are several reasons that I can think of that can explain why comrades fall into the "us and them". One is powerlessness. Confronted by

the juggernaut of consumptive capitalism devouring more and more of the biosphere we take refuge in one of the all to few organisations to stand against reaction red in tooth and claw. I am speaking now of the CNT. (please note again, I am not invalidationg anarcho-syndicalism in itself, I am arguing against those who see anarcho-syndicalism as the beginning and the end of the social revolution). First, Pre and revolutionary Spain exampled a great profusion of radical activities. These people actually appeared to spend more time fighting the bourgeoisie than each other...The CNT itself represents the high water mark of anarchism but it did not stand alone. It rose up in a ferment of anarchist activity. Second: We lost. Maybe we could never have won but that doesn't excuse anarchist ministers in government; anarchist failure to deal with the counter-revolution incarnate (the communists)§ anarchist failure to seize the gold reserves (I mean if you are going to seize the means of production why not seize the means of exchange);anarchist abandonment of the militias; anarchist involvment in positional warfare etc. In short conventionalism in its many forms may have meant the death of a revolution, and the status of the CNT, deepite its drift to a conventional solutions, may have prevented other more radical solutions being implemented.

Personally I would rather have a frontal lobotomy than a united front.

The other is: armouring. (Now I realize that all this is sounding a psychological but as I have personally encountered vast outpourings of venom from people who I supposedly have more in common with than 99%of the population I can only assume that these motherfuckers are somewhat twisted). Anyway in this vale of tears strange mutations abound. Escapees still bearing the marks of societies pliers somehow propound anarchist ideals while not altering their pavlovian posture one iota. This separation (of theory and practice) is symtomatic of this society of the insane. Those of us who want to stand the world on its head move from a realisation that everything is upsidedown. Now these poor contorted souls take refuge in anarchism as it embodies there ideals but does not coerse them into doing anything about it. This is immensly sad and not at all easy for the sensitive of stomach (I mean having to watch these cripples drag themselves from one source of sedation to another). It is also very frustating for anarchists, confronting society as it is, to have to deal with people who say that they are allies but act like the enemy. And we too come from that factory and it is a slippery slope that we all are on. Here anarcho-syndicalism can be a safe harbour from such a sea of bad dreams. It is a yes, a no, a straight line, a goal, And this is good. Too often anarchists find themselves with enemies everywhere, take on the whole world, and with such impossible odds come crashing down in utter defeat. To pick ones priorities and put our queer shoulders to that wheel, to shield ourselves from this mad world, this is sensible. Little Willy Reich will tell you that armouring is o.k. but rigidity? Problems seem to arise when ones target is too large or too far away, beyond ones abilities or at odds with the prevailing situation. Then other targets, closer to home become more and more tempting. Bitchyness, factionalism in all its forms is counter-productive and counter-revolutionary. Anarchism is the synthesis of the individual and society, one does not negate the other. Anarchism allows the individual genius of say a Makhno to augment the struggle of the Ukrainian insurrectional armyu.This has all been said before. A long time ago. Those who speak of anarchism without understanding that

the social revolution is the greatest adventure you could ever embark on, have a corpse in their mouths, it's their own.

BOOK REVIEW: Anarchism and State Violence in Sydney and Melbourne, 1886 - 1896, by Bob James.

The appearance of the Anarchism and State Violence in Sydney and Melbourne, by Bob James is of great importance to those who are able to transcend the web of Marxist and conservative historiographies and go beyond that officialdom and perceive and assess anarchist-libertarian elements in the making of Australian Labour history, elements which are either ignored or played down by historians. In this sense B. James' book fills an important gap in Labour History and its impact has yet to be assessed properly. Readers can find an excellent review in the Anarcho-Syndicalist paper Rebel Worker, Dec. 1986 - Jan. 1987, and for convenience I refer them to it.In that review Peter S. stressed many positive features, which I am in agreement with and I have no intention to repeat them here, instead I wish to extend criticisms implied in that review but not sufficiently elaborated.

The book, which covers events set in the last century, is historically excellent but suffers from an imposition of contemporary theories in order to explain those events, thus minimizing, if not denigrating, the protagonists of labour history. Certainly the author's genuine interest is to extend the historical analysis to include features hitherto ignored by historians, instead of arguing that the exclusion of such features impoverishes the historical analysis, he hints that their exclusion from revolutionary praxis led to the failure of the latter. In a discursive manner I will try to air some criticisms of his explanatory theory.

He claims, here and there, that economic analysis is not sufficient for explaining social phenomena and one cannot but agree with him. Nonetheless, while not sufficient it is necessary for an understanding of human conditions within a given economic structure. If economic analysis has narrowed its scope to pure economic factors and commodfying the human and has become bourgois and conservative it is not a fault of economic analysis itself, but of the fact that economists have failed to transcend the political economy they intended to destroy. Instead they have been seduced by the privileges it bestows upon them, become staunch supporters of it and infused new blood into the economics of oppression.

To show the failure of economics as a liberatory force the author brings to our attentions the self-management economic experiments. "Economic-contained experiments with self-management, whether in socialist or free enterprise contexts have failed to liberate human potential." (p.268). Naturally it failed, but the author confusses the ideology of self-management for self-management. The socialist self-management (Yugoslav style) is neither a socialist nor a self-management venture. This is also true of the self-management in the context of free enterprises. Both are paradigm cases of false consciousness and both operate within the economy of exploitation. To assume that people who live in fear, who are forced to accept situations under threat, who are oppressed, who depend on masters, and

by necessity have to collaborate with them, can establish a self-managed society or express a like relationship is a utopia in the making. Self-management, as a concept, implies more than economics. It is a conscious stand, a rational approach within a theoretical and practical framework where self is an active participant, economy is egalitarian, and communication an active ingredient. This is difficult to attain. One only has to look at the attempt to establish self-management within domestic economism.

In domestic economism there is a conscious effort to overrule economism in favour of the will of consciousness, a voluntaristic act to "liberate human potential ". Domestic tasks are shared. Duty and obligation are equally distributed. But its famework is based on a roster mentality, cannonized by sexual ethical values to which the person is subservient. In fact this is not far way from the Spartan barrack culture, totalitarian and egalitarian, all are equals but no one emancipated, conscious of the group but lacking individuality, where anti-sexism is compulsary behaviour instead of conscious realization. Thus, even in this miniature domestic economic and psychological unit self-management is absent because spontaniety is precluded and regimentation prescribed.

I agree that "the word 'worker' does not define a whole person"(24)given the way the author uses that word. in the capital producing society. If the producer of a commodity is himself a commodity. If he is reified, he cannot be a whole person. If he is a whole person, alienation so fashionable, will be absent. The word "worker" correctly used, however, expresses more than an economic activity. It is the relationship the individual enters into with the productive forces of a given society which are not only economic but symbolic too. Class analysis does not ignore the human aspect of the worker and if it has become reductivist, it is due to modern political expediency, convenience and profit realisation and extraction.

The author argues that those who perceive history as a dialectical movement and who use class analysis as a method to raise proletarian consciousness are sexist. This does not follow. He gives the example of two male thinkers who argued that women's liberation was an OECD plot to divert attention from class issues (p.24). This is perhaps an oversimplified point of view, but not necessarily a sexist one. To recognize class issues in no way necessarily implies not recognizing sexist issues. In fact cultural feminists have been criticized by radical feminists precisely because they assume "that men are the enemy by virtue of their maleness rather than the power a patriarchal system leads them" (* p.443. The cultural feminists, for example, while ignoring class analysis put their emphasis on man's institutions as instrumental in achieving their purpose which is capitalism in feminist attire. "We will never make the immense chainges that as feminists we see necessary by imitating the structures men have created " (* p.443).

Sexism is the favourite weapon, the author uses to demolish revolutionaries' personal integrity and men in general. He implies that had the revolutionaries not been sexists, the revolutionary outcome would have been different. This is a tenable line of argument. Unfortunately, the author then

proceeds to confuse sexism, a categorical issue, with the psychology of individual sexuality. For example, he states that: "...sex, marriage and women's role...are areas of great personal fearfulness and guilt..."(p.234), hence "... even communist males found it difficult going". There is no evidence given for this reccuring statement about the psychology of male sexuality. However, even if it were to be a factually correct statement, it is no proof of sexism. This clouds the historical analysis and creates an unresolvable dialectical myth rather than elucidating revolutionary propositions. If man's psychology is anchored in his gender, man is nothing but a chauvinist, imperialist, aggressor, conqueror, killer and rapist. The immutable masculinity, man's inner make up, deprives him from revolutionary possibilities. It is again maleness that is the barrier "rather than the power a patriarchal system leads to " (*p.443)

On the other hand, woman with her feminine mystic and the realisation of being oppressed is endowed with all virtuesThe whole of the women's movement is against male-dominated hierarchies and the prevailing 'wisdom' has long been women, are more inclined to anti-war and anti-violence attitudes than men,...(239-240). She has the right vision. Her personal, social and historical perceptions are clear and unbiased signs of a correct revolutionary approach. If by virtue of being oppressed, one acquires clear vision and true consciousness why then has the free society failed to be realised after so many bloody revolutions which, instead of being emancipatory, have forged better chains for the oppressed? Well, it appears the history of liberation is not, as Croce claims, 'a story of liberty' but a story of authority of which the theory of gender is one manifestation.

A culture where feminine and masculine, sadism and masochism, superiority and inferiority are established as binary propositions, where feminine sexuality is inferiorized and masculine superiorized or vice versa, where sexuality as such is objectified, is a negative, oppressive culture whose dismantling is necessary if the individual is to attain authenticity, freedom and recuperate the initiative which makes him/her the author of his/her life. To claim sexual and political equality within the democratic institutions of such a society as being sexual liberation, sexual revolution and affirmation of the desire and the pleasure principle, is nothing other than an affirmation of the bourgeois code of signs. Many feminists may consider access to power and turning the bourgeois code in their favour as revolutionary achievments. But they are trapped in their authoritarian predicament, not realizing that only the revolutionary act, the abolition of the bourgeois code and the culture of binaries, leads to liberation, emancipation and opens possibilities for revolutionary and individual realisations.

Revolutionaries have failed for many reasons, one of them, as the author suggests is "..few of them were sufficiently committed to act when it came to the crunch" (258). Unlike us those revolutionaries lived in times when persecution, goals, threat to life were real, not a figment of the imagination, romantic inventions or of a research interest. They lived in times where two distinctive socialist feature were emerging: authoritarian and anti-authoritarian. The former adopted legality as a method, the latter-the revolution. Debate within the general socialist movement was authority versus anti-authority, power versus freedom, privileges versus equality, state versus society. Certainly people were confused about many issues related to socialism but, perhaps, less than we are today. After such a rich experience

of revolutions betrayed we are still ambivalent to authority at many levels, despite our anti-authoritarian and liberatory language, and when it comes to the crunch we never cross Rubicon but withdraw to our comfortable niche of revolutionary pathos. Not only that, knowing the outcome of authoritarian socialism, the abject oppression of the individual and suppression of all liberties, and seeing that democracy means imperialism, militarism and the defence of capitalism, we continue to glorify one or other system and to be seduced by the handout they are so generous with. Why after such a rich and documented experience have we not advanced an inch forward? And, if we have, it is due to the sacrifices of those long time decomposed bodies which we interogate, judge and condemn. We see their faults more easily than our own power craving ideologies.

Power is not only a class, state or a group prerogative. Its refined mechanisms operate in trends such as down to earth alternatives as much as up to heaven ones, in conscious raising groups, at personal as well as social levels. It hides under the cloak of anti-sexism and emancipatory practices. Historically the best chains were forged in the name of liberation, the worst economic dependency in the name of socialist equality, the effacement of the individual and denial of subjectivity in the name of emancipation and personal realisation. The enslavement and the mutilation of the body and mind are more often done in the stillness of the night where power is invisible but effective.

"Revolutionists shared with their militant opponents a diminishing view of the individual's importance and an exaggerated belief in collusions of competting, heroic forces to decide moral contest"(228).

To equate revolutionaries' view of the individual to that of their 'militant opponents' is definitely a categorical mistake. In the bourgois worldview the individual occupies an important place, but the bourgeois individualist is ego-centric, rapacious and exploitative, whereas, the anarcho-socialist is assertive but in solidarity and socialism. If he stresses the pre-eminence of economic factors, he, nevertheless, searches for a solution of the dichotomy: individual -society. The author himself brings enough evidence in support of that. Capitalism ought to be wiped out and liberty established but on foundations that make it "impossible for others to control us (245)"; people who come together are to be "self-respecting and self-governing men and women (246)" and not ones who "pitifully beseech alms (247)." Or as Kropotkin put it : "Revolution...whilst it maintains the slavery of the hearth, will not be revolution (239)" and Andrade's statment that:"The economic fetters being removed and woman becoming equal of man, her wretched dependence upon him will have vanished, and she will be sovereign over her own body, her own mind and her own passions (235)."

On the other side some revolutionaries may have narrowed the human conflict to Armageddon of two classes. In fact, no authentic revolutionary considered the barricade as a 'moral contest', because a)violence is counter-productive and the sacrifices do not justify the revolutionary end and b) violence is imposed rather than elicited by revolutionaries. It is governments and states that necessitate violence to survive because their own existence is to force and to oppress. True, there are many self-professed revolutionaries whose Jesuitism is undeniable, but they fight to substitute one master for another rather than to see a free and classless society.

The author argues that "Personalising one's politics when speaking of voluntary contracts in the 1880s required radical adjustments to one's views of sex, marriage and women's role (234)." To adjust is to surrender partially or totally to an individual, group, party or nationality,or to'isms' the individual is surrounded with. Personalising if it is to be a revolutionary weapon, necessitates not adjustment but placing within a rational personal framework freedom, emancipatory theory and practices, and equality at all possible levels. Personalising is not only a paradigm of consciousness and language but a paradigm of behaviour, relations and communications. In other words it pertains to the organic individual where freedom and rationality operates on a horizontal level. Such an individual has no gender proclivities. To ascribe violence to maleness, love and passivity to femaleness is a) divisive, b) conventional. c) bourgeois and hierarchical and d) unrelated to the whole person, the organic individual. The revolutionary praxis of such an individual is to destabilize and resist the above dichotomies. The role of the organic individual is not to be confused with that of the narcissistic solipcist, who is mushrooming in all marginal movements. Rather the role is to create an environment which is propitious to effective personal use, where expressions are authentic and the participants reflective persons. Such an environment cannot exist in a society of privileges and pauperism, of emotional and intellectual eunuchs, of a dichotomy of I and You.If such an experience is allowed on the marginality of society, it is to emaciate the person and make personal power innocuous escapism..

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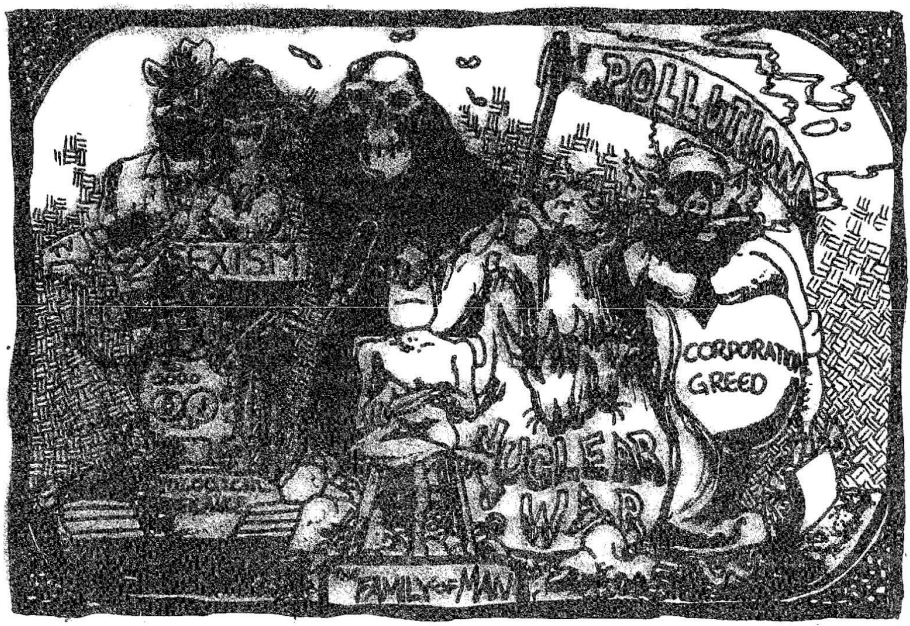
Echolea. The new feminism of Yin and Yang. In A.Snitow et eds. Powers of Desire. New york, Monthly Review Press, 1983, pp 439-459.



VI

THE MATERIALIST EXPOSITION OF HISTORY.

We already know the value of the "great discoveries" attributed by Engels to Marx and, indirectly, to himself; we know, also, the part played by the State, exploiter and oppressor, so dear to Mr. Engels's disciples. It now remains for us to study the third discovery, that of "the materialist exposition of history." Let us hearken to Engels's definition of it:*

"The materialist conception of history is based on the idea that the production and exchange of things (products and values) form the foundation of every social organization. In every human society the distribution of wealth and the formation of classes or of ranks in society are the result of the method of production and exchange practised by the society."

The idea is true enough in itself, apart from a certain exaggeration of statement. The method of production shows us the state of the culture and civilization of a society or historical period. But that was well known before 1845, and even before the 20th of November, 1820, when Engels was born; only it was then spoken of as the influence of economic factors on history. But the sum of economic factors, which we call "Economism," is not the same thing as Materialism. The mode of production is only *one* factor, or rather one element among many

* All Social Democratic compilers, of every nation, agree in attributing to Engels the exposition of materialism in history, and recognize that Marx only reduced it to a formula. We shall see below that the author of this rather startling exposition is in direct contradiction to Marx. The latter, a revolutionist by conviction, never denied the part played by force and struggle in history, and never affirmed that the inductive sciences are known under the name of metaphysics.

others which serve as the evolutionary generalizations known under the name of materialistic doctrines. A *part* cannot contain the *whole*, and Economism cannot make up the whole doctrine of Materialism. We know many writers who have admitted the influence of conditions and economic relations in the development of humanity, who were not only idealists and metaphysicians, but deists in every sense, and fervent Christians. Guizot, for instance, who traced the history of class antagonism in England during the seventeenth century, was as bigoted as a Trappist monk. Or there is Niebuhr, the founder of the German historical school, of which Mommsen is one of the most brilliant representatives; at the very beginning of this century he declared that the legends of Titus Livius about the origin of Rome must be set aside, and we must study history according to the economic and social conditions of the Roman people. From this we may date the investigations into the agrarian laws of Licinius Stolo and the Gracchi, and the minute research of Mommsen. But Niebuhr, Mommsen, and all the German school were very far from Materialism.

We shall find the same thing if we go back to the first historian who hinted at the influence of cosmic and economic conditions on the progress and development of humanity, and consult Vico (1668-1774) or his French translator, Michelet, who for his part dwelt at length on economic conditions in his researches into the origin of French law. Adam Smith, another man of genius and the founder of Political Economy, stated the following fundamental formula as early as 1776:

1. Labor is the only source of social wealth.
2. The increase of wealth depends on the economic and social conditions of labor, and the proportion between the number of producers and non-producers.

But this modest philosopher laid no claim to Materialism. A. Blanqui, again, a good citizen and professor, tho less original and profound than Adam Smith, thus formulated in 1825 the part played by economic elements in history: "I was not long in perceiving that between these two sciences of History and Political Economy there existed so many points of contact that it was impossible to study one without the other, or fully to apprehend either separately. One furnishes the facts; the other explains the causes. Step by step I followed the great events of history, and in each I found two parties alone—those who wished to live on their labor, and those who wished to live on the labor of others—patricians and plebeians—slaves and free—Guelfs and Ghibellines, the Red Rose and the White, Cavaliers and Roundheads, the philanthropist and the pauper: all are varieties of the same species."

Political Economy explains the causes of historic movements, says Blanqui, and his contemporaries, Mignet, Augustin Thierry, etc., say the same. In England, J. S. Mill, in his analysis of the first volume of Michelet's "History of France," classifies the historical schools, and lays it down with his usual clearness that history, like all modern science, is occupied with the causes and social or cosmic laws which govern the development of humanity ("Dissertations and Discussions"). H. T. Buckle, in his admirable attempt to trace the influence of cosmic laws, social conditions, and even food, on history, says: "Of all the results which are produced among a people by their climate, food, and soil, the accumulation of wealth is the earliest and in many respects the most important." ("History of Civilization," Vol. I., p. 40; compare pp. 49, 50, 53, etc.) Professor Rogers, who was a contemporary of Marx and Engels, but who entirely ignores them, besides his great work on "Six Centuries of Work and Wages," has a book on "The Economic Interpretation of History," in which he analyzes the whole history of England from the economic point of view. Have these men of learning of different nationalities the least claim to Materialism? Certainly not. They were men of learning engaged in the search for truth. They followed the methods of scientific research in their study of history, and could give no other name to the result of their labors but the economic exposition of history.

How, then, did it come about that Engels, who wrote specially for workmen, for people crushed by superhuman labor, people who had neither the time nor the means to verify his assertions—how did it come about that Engels used the word Materialism for what the men of science called Economism? Why, instead of saying to the workers: "My friends, science as a whole, as expressed in the researches of all the men of learning in Europe, goes to prove that the happiness and development of the human race is created by your labor, that the welfare of humanity depends on your happiness and conditions favorable to your productive activity (Adam Smith); that, in consequence, the working classes are bound to destroy as soon as possible the organization of the State and the exploiting or the oppressive classes," why, I ask, instead of giving a purely scientific analysis, did he hide the truth from the honest worthy people who took him at his word? And what result is gained by this method, which appears more than strange? Politicians, unscrupulous men, who, owing to their complete ignorance, are incapable of the least intellectual labor, learn by heart two pamphlets by Engels and a popular version of Marx, and then pose as men of science; and if, perchance, the workers in all good faith send them to parliament, they declare, like Guesde, that Socialism has never been represented in parlia-

ment before! Just as tho Louis Blanc and Proudhon and others had never existed.

But what a disillusion for honest people when they learned the mystification of which they were made the victims by the *chief* of the "scientific Socialists."

I remember a discussion with a Social Democrat, a young man of good education and wide reading, but unfortunately of late years entirely immersed in the indifferent pamphlets and publications of the party, publications *under censure*, that is to say, by Engels and Auer. In the course of the discussion he read me triumphantly, as something new and entirely "materialistic," a passage from an attack by Engels upon Professor Dühring: "Sprung from the animals, humanity appeared in history in a half-animal condition. Savages powerless in the face of Nature, without any idea of their own power and capacity, men were poor and miserable as the animals, and as incapable of production." For answer, I took Volney's "Ruins," and read: "In the beginning, man, naked in body and mind, found himself thrown hap-hazard upon the hostile and savage earth. Like other animals, without experience of the past or knowledge of the future, he wandered in the depths of forests, guided and governed only by natural sensations. The pain of hunger drove him to food. The inclemency of the weather made him cover his body with clothing. Drawn by pleasure, he approached a being like himself and propagated his species" *(Les Ruines,* Paris, 7th year of the Republic, 1798). You should have seen that young man's astonishment!

If the words, "sprung from an animal," are not to be found in Volney, the only reason is that Darwin's book did not appear until 1859. Engels, altho he opposes the Materialism of the Naturalists, in order to gain readers, admits the descent of man as established by them. Otherwise one would think that Engels had copied Volney. But are we to suppose that Volney originated those ideas? Not at all. He was an enlightened man of extraordinary literary power, and he diffused the ideas of his time. I have quoted Volney and Blanqui simply to prove that, since the beginning of the century, the economic explanation was not a conception limited to men of exceptional genius, but was a doctrine acknowledged by all enlightened people; and if Engels thought that by adopting ideas, widely admitted long ago by educated people, he was making a discovery and becoming a benefactor to humanity, he was strangely deceived. But that is not the fault of Vico and the encyclopedists, nor of Adam Smith and the English philosophers, nor of Niebuhr and the brilliant German school of history.

Nor is it the fault of science if Engels has mixed everything up,—metaphysics with science, Materialism with Economism,—and like the pretentious person he was, has declared himself opposed to the Materialism of the naturalists, the only scientific Materialism. How did that come to be? I have many reasons for not touching on that question; but the fact remains, and German workmen who have had the misfortune to read Engels's pamphlets are convinced that Hegel's metaphysics is the inductive science, with the systems of transformation, evolution, and Monism; while the inductive science of Bacon and Locke, Lamarck, Darwin, and Helmholtz, is only metaphysics! By metaphysics, science means that senile Scholasticism which preached the absurdity that Nature and the outside world are nothing but a reflection of our innate ideas, and that to know the physical world one must not study Nature, but the facts and phenomena of a supernatural spirit. From this the word "metaphysics" was derived: for it signifies "after or below physics or Nature." "Scientific Socialists," please note!

The mortal blow to this theological and supernatural stupidity was given by Bacon and Locke, by Voltaire and the encyclopedists, and the whole English philosophy. Those various pioneers of modern science proved that our knowledge and ideas are derived from the observation and study of Nature, and that, in consequence, we must study natural phenomena in their manifestation and origin according to the inductive method. But this is what Engels tells the workmen: "Transported into philosophy by Bacon and Locke, this inductive method created the very characteristic narrowness in the ideas of the last two centuries and produced the method of metaphysical reasoning."*

This assertion of Engels, and his further statement that the doctrines of Evolution and Transformation, that is, the science of the naturalists, are derived from Hegel's philosophy, are neither more nor less than glaring errors and contradictions to scientific terminology. Marx himself solemnly gives him the lie: "Denounced and overthrown by French Materialism, the metaphysics of the seventeenth century had their revenge

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* In the Russian press, in which a contest against the Marxists has been going on for the last two years, this unique passage in literary history has already been pointed out, but no one has confronted Engels with Marx. This Russian polemic is very interesting. While the best Russian journalists and all decent people are opposed to Engels, the reactionaries defend him. One of them calls on honest folk to band themselves together as disciples of capitalism. Another, without shame or compunction, declared that Tchernychevsky, that noble martyr under Russian despotism, a man whom Marx much admired, was an abject servant to capitalism.

and restoration in the speculative German philosophy of the nineteenth Since Hegel founded his universal metaphysical empire, attacks against theology, similar to those of the eighteenth century, have been renewed and are directed in general against all speculative philosophy and all metaphysics." ("French Materialism of the Eighteenth Century.")

Nor is science to blame if Engels, immersed in metaphysical absurdities, believed up to 1842 that the world and Nature, this beautiful, living, and life-giving Nature, were the expression of his own queer ideas. It is, moreover, to his metaphysical belief that everything which he saw or read must be a reflection of his own ideas, that we must attribute his strange mania for claiming the paternity of ideas and systems elaborated by science long before his birth. We cannot otherwise explain his ridiculous pretensions and his not too scientific demonstrations. Must we assume that he did not even suspect the existence of all this historical literature? In that case—well, he must have been a queer "leader" in the science of a scientific party.* We must then assume that, even in philosophy, he was devoid of quite elementary knowledge. For instance, he was quite unaware that the chief idea in Feuerbach's atheistic doctrine, namely, that man deified his own human nature in his divinities, was a commonplace among French essayists more than half a century before the publication of Feuerbach's work. In Volney's "Ruins," mentioned above, we read: "Like the world, of which he is a part, man is governed by natural laws, regular in their course, consistent in their effects, unalterable in their essence" (p. 39, French ed.). "It is not God who made man in his image, but man who has fashioned God in his. He has given God his mind, clad him with his inclinations, and endowed him with his judgments" (p. 85).

You may say that Engels no doubt knew all this. Be it so. But in that case, why did he show such disingenuousness? Why did he create, without cause, a more than deplorable confusion in the conscience of the workers? With what object did he blind his readers' eyes? Certainly not to the advantage of truth or Socialism.

- V. Tcherkesoff

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